

REMARKS

This is a response to the Office Action mailed on April 7, 2004.

Claim 1 is amended to incorporate claims 2, 3 and 4.

Claim 16 is amended to incorporate claims 17, 18 and 19.

New independent claim 40 incorporates claims 1, 2, 3 and 5.

New independent claim 41 incorporates claims 1, 2, 3 and 6.

New independent claim 42 incorporates claims 1 and 12.

New independent claim 43 incorporates claims 16, 17, 18 and 20.

New independent claim 44 incorporates claims 16, 17, 18 and 21.

New independent claim 45 incorporates claims 16 and 27.

Claims 2-7, 12, 14, 17-22, 27 and 29-31 are cancelled.

Claim 31 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101. Claims 1, 2, 7-11, 13, 15-17, 22-26, 28-30 and 32-39 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,226,652 to Percival et al., in view of U.S. Patent 6,216,140 to Kramer and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,446,240 to Maslov. Claims 3, 18 and 31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Percival et al. in view of Kramer and Maslov and further in view of U.S. Patent 3,711,863 to Bloom. The Examiner has indicated that claims 4-6, 12, 19-21 and 27 contain allowable subject matter.

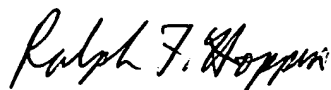
To expedite the allowance of the application, and without conceding to the propriety of the rejections, each of the independent claims has been amended to include the allowable subject matter. The new independent claims similarly include the allowable subject matter.

Accordingly, each of the claims is now believed to be in condition for immediate allowance.

Moreover, the rejection to claim 31 is obviated by the cancellation of this claim.

It is therefore respectfully requested that this application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance be issued. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with the Applicants' attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ralph F. Hoppin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "H".

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